

Sinclair Broadcasting is using its public license to promote a partisan cause. This film is not new and not journalism. Sinclair claims a First Amendment right to air this program, a right it denied to Nightline's tribute to soldiers who have died in Iraq. Nor is it granting this right to its affiliates who are being instructed to pre-empt regular programming in order to air a piece that violates their commitment to act responsibly and fairly in the public interest. They have no intent to air similar programming which provides viewers with a piece that presents the other view of Mr. Kerry's wartime service.

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.